
Tiger Moon and Tiger Melon Quilt Block with Sarah Bond

Chapter 1 - Tiger Moon and Tiger Melon Quilt Block

Overview

(soft music) - Welcome to Tiger Melon & Tiger Moon, a fun class with a funny name. (soft music) This class came about when I was experimenting with some leftovers from another quilt, and I took the two curved pieces with spikes in them and I put them together, and all of a sudden I had this compelling shape that had a lot of great design features. My name is Sarah Bond. I have been quilting for many years. I love traditional quilt features, traditional elements but I like to change them around and express them in new and different ways. The Tiger Melon & the Tiger Moon are paper pieced and both of these blocks also have curved piecing. I will show you my own tips and tricks for effective paper piecing using your fabric judiciously so that you don't waste, and making your points and your edges come together cleanly so that you have a nice crisp finish. This is actually one of my favorite blocks to play with, and I'm excited to share it with you. (soft music)

Materials

- Let's talk about materials for Tiger Melon, Tiger Moon. First, you need to choose your fabric. You can use solids, you can use patterns, you can use large scraps, you can use fat quarters. This particular pattern is very friendly to a lot of different kinds of fabric. I've chosen two sets of fabric. This is gonna be for my Tiger Melon up here, and this will be for my Tiger Moon. I've chosen two alternating fabrics for the points and the background on my piece, and then a different color for the shoulder that goes around the edge of the moon or the melon. You can choose more fabrics, you can make all of your spikes a different color, there's all kinds of things you can do, you don't have to follow any particular rule, but you do wanna have sort of a variety of fabrics. You're gonna want to download the pattern. You can see here, the Tiger Melon is an oval shape once you put the two halves together, the Tiger Moon is going to give you a round block. You'll also need your rulers. For this class, I'm not sure you definitely need a big, long one, but I always like to have one available, and I like to have a smaller one available for trimming. It's up to you what you'd like to use. You're gonna need a mat and rotary cutter. I have two sizes here, because I like to have a smaller rotary cutter to go around some of my curves. I use the larger one for straight cutting. And I have some other tools here. I have my shears when I'm trimming with my shears, I have two seam rippers here. One is sort of a traditional one that you've probably seen quite a bit. The other one is an eyebrow shaver, which I first used in a class with a quilter, and I found it to be really good for me for removing a lot of stitches without damage to the fabric. It's one of my favorite tools. I also have pins for sewing sections together. I don't use a lot of pins, but I like to keep 'em around, because I'll need them from time to time. And I have here an unusual tool. You'll need to be doing finger pressing in the process of putting together these blocks, and this is one of my favorite finger pressing tools. It's the cap to a fancy Italian mineral water bottle and it's perfect for me for pressing and getting a good crease for a few reasons. Number one, it's white, so there's no color transfer onto my work. Number two, there's this little embossed pattern on it that provides extra friction. It grabs that fabric when I'm creasing and gives me a better fold. And the third thing is that it fits nicely on my finger and makes it easy for me to finger press. Also, thread, I use a medium gray for all of my piecing. It blends in well with all kinds of colors. I use bright colors, I use softer colors, I use patterns, and a medium gray works well for me with almost everything. You also will need an iron and some

kind of an ironing board or a pad, and a sewing machine. You want your machine to be in good working order, oiled, cleaned. You wanna have some spare needles in case you break a needle. That's what you need for this class. And let's get started.

Tiger Melon - paper piecing

- We're gonna start with the tiger melon. First thing we'll need to do is cut out our pattern. I like to trim the pattern out with a maybe a quarter of an inch, something like that around my solid black line because then I can easily trim in that line when I'm finished with the piecing and I get a nice clean edge. Just rough cut. Alright, so there's my pattern. Some of you might be wondering about cutting paper with the rotary cutter and whether that dulls the blade. And probably over time it does. But so much of what I do dulls the blade anyway so I'll just throw a new blade in. But you can do it with your paper scissors if you prefer. Now you'll want to cut your wedges. I always precut my pieces when I'm paper piecing. It's a rough precut, it's not exact, but it gives me a piece that I know is going to cover the spaces that I need to cover and it just makes things a little bit more convenient and I think it makes for a little bit less waste. So that's my general protocol. I have two colors here. I'm going to be combining again, this gorgeous dark fabric with the light colored letters with this rough stripe. So I'm looking forward to this one. We're gonna be cutting wedges that are two and a half inches wide at the base and a half inch wide at the top. I'm going to take one cut here to get my initial incline. And then I'm going to just roughly measure here two and a half inches along the bottom, half inch at the top, and cut. And then I'll just flip my ruler, slant it the other way and get my half inch down here and my two and a half base up at the top. You will need, let's just look at this for a minute. You'll need seven wedges for your points and eight wedges for whatever will be your background fabric. Often because I like big quilts and I like to make a lot of elements and so I'll cut as many as will come out of a strip. But for those people who want to actually cut the right number of pieces that they need, you will need seven points and eight background wedges. So what do we have here? Two, four. I have four layers of fabric here, two of the pink and two of the darker color. There we go. So that should do it for me. I'm just gonna separate these to make them a little bit easier to work with. So my dark and my pink. And then we'll be ready to paper piece. All right, onto the paper piecing. As we prepare to paper piece this, let's just look at the pattern for a minute so we can see how we're gonna place these wedges. Generally when you have points like this you have wedges oriented where your point is oriented next to a base. And up here your base is oriented next to a point. But because of the curved nature of this piece here at the end, you're gonna be positioning your wedges so that you have two bases together. If you look at these shapes here, you have this point here with a base, and this is essentially another point with a base here, even though we've got that curved edge. So I just wanna point that out as you're positioning these so that you can position those the right way. All right, let's start. I'm going to take two pieces. When you start your paper piecing you're always going to start with two pieces together. Those pieces need to be right side together. And as I mentioned here, we have base to base. So I'm going to put those right side together. And then the other thing we need to remember is that whatever fabric is going to be in this area needs to be closest to the backside of the paper. So because I wanna use this pink in my points here I'm gonna flip this over so that this fabric is closest to the paper, okay. Now I just wanna place this, and you can kind of see just by looking here. I wanna place this so that this edge of these two wedges is about a quarter inch inside my sewing line, this is gonna be my sewing line. And you can just see from the overhang here that it is about a quarter inch inside. I'm just gonna check this edge to make sure I have coverage here with these two pieces of fabric, which

I do. We're gonna be trimming on the solid black line. So I really do have plenty of room 'cause I can see the edge of this fabric peeking out over here. So I think I'm good. I'm gonna go ahead and pick this up and put it in the machine. Now I don't have to really orient the entire length of that piece to the line. All I need to do is make sure that this top section is in the right place. So I can go ahead here and I need to get my thread underneath. I'm gonna put my foot down and I'm gonna take a couple of stitches. I'm stitching from the outer black line, and now I'm gonna stop with the needle down and just double check. I'm gonna peek under here, take a look at my sewing line, take a look at where the edge of this paper is hitting and I feel confident that I have this lined up. So I'm gonna go ahead and sew. So I have my needle down. I'm just gonna sew down this line. All righty, so I'm just gonna clip my thread, and then flip this over. And I'm just gonna pick it up and just hold it to this light. I can see here the edge of that fabric shadowing behind the paper there. And so since this is my next sewing line, I know I'm good because that fabric reaches past that sewing line. So now I wanna take a look at this and figure out whether I need to trim. You're really just trimming for bulk here. With paper piecing, you know, sometimes you get sort of a lot of fabric hanging around in the back and I like to try to keep it neat and not too bulky. So I usually will go ahead and trim it out if it seems like I have extra fabric. And I'm gonna find my nifty pressing tool and I'm just gonna press that fabric back so I get a good extension there. And I'm just gonna hit it with the tool. And again, you may have a different kind of pressing tool that you like. Maybe you have a bone folder, maybe you have one of those little rollers, whatever it is that works for you just to get a good crease on that fabric. So now you're gonna wanna add another wedge. Let's just look at this on the front to see how this is laying out. We've covered this wedge. Now we're going to come in and cover this wedge. So let's turn it to the other side and see what's going on here. We're gonna want this piece to end up like this. And what we're doing is stitching and flipping. So that means it has to go on like this and then flip over. So I'm gonna place it here. This is my next sewing line. I'm gonna place this piece behind so that the edge is about a quarter inch inside my sewing line. And you can see I have this wedge pushed up high enough that when I flip it will cover on this incline that's going on because of this curve. Since I don't have to worry about aligning the entire piece, I'm just going to go ahead, drop my needle in there and then I will check for alignment at the bottom. So dropping in couple of stitches, needle down. Now I'm gonna peek under here. There's my line. I can see that this is awfully close to the line there. So I'm going to swing that a little bit. Again, so there's my sewing line and you can see the edge of this peeking out. So we feel comfortable that that is well positioned past my sewing line. So now I'll go ahead and sew down that line. Let me get that tail off of there. I'm flipping it over now just to make sure that I have coverage. And I'm going to just check here. You can see I hope the shadow of that edge which is nicely extending past my next sewing line. So I have quite a bit of extra in here now. So I'm gonna go ahead and trim. Some of you might like to trim with your rotary cutter. You can fold the paper back and trim that way. I don't usually do that only because I have a tendency when I use the rotary cutter with paper piecing, eventually at some point I end up cutting off the pattern with the rotary cutter or maybe I cut off the piece that I just sewed on. I don't know why I have a perceptual problem with that but I solve it just by using my shears instead. So I'm going to place the blade of my shears between the paper and the fabric. And that way I know I'm not cutting anything that I don't want to cut. And I'm just trimming to approximately a quarter inch, sometimes a little, maybe a little slimmer. And then again, I'm going to press. All right, and now you're ready for your next wedge which here is the pink. And when you're doing this paper piecing, as you apply the next piece, you wanna make sure that you give this a little twitch, just a little pull. You don't wanna pull it hard because you don't wanna distort your shapes

but you don't wanna have a situation where you have sort of a bubble going on there with your fabric. You wanna make sure it's laying nice and flat against the paper. You place your next wedge behind there, drop your foot couple of stitches, needle down. Now left up here, there's my edge. Here's my sewing line. It's kind of far there so we're gonna swing it so we're closer to that quarter inch that we like. There's my line, there's the edge, something like a quarter of an inch. Now I'll drop and sew. These wedges are cut to be generous enough that you have a little wiggle room so you don't have to worry too much about placing it exactly perfectly in order to have success. I was just going to get ready to trim but it's important to just check to make sure you have enough extension before you trim, because if for some reason you've placed it such that you don't have enough, you probably wanna have that extra bit that you were gonna trim off just so you have enough room to get your coverage. All right, here, I'm doing great. Extending past the sewing line, I think you can see that. So we're good. Now I can trim. And you can see when I flip this back over that we're starting to get that nice pattern of those points, got a level point. So we have those nice pink points against that darker background. And I'm happy with my fabric choice here. Sometimes I'm not really sure, I'll pick something and sometimes I love it and sometimes I don't love it quite as much but I have a variety of levels of passion in my fabric. I don't wanna reject something just 'cause it doesn't drive me crazy. Okay, so you're gonna add your next piece. You're gonna place your wedge behind. We have an incline here, but it's not quite as steep. So you wanna make sure that you've extended this piece up high enough to cover that incline. But you don't have to go too high because it's a little bit more shallow than the last. And you're gonna be following this curve as you paper piece all the way across this piece. So when you get to this side where you have downhill you're not gonna have to worry about where to place that edge because you're always going to be able to hit the other side because it's gonna be lower than where you initially placed the piece. Put it in the machine, couple of stitches. And here you can see this edge is way out of line. So I'm going to slide that over so that that edge is about a quarter inch inside the sewing line. And on we go. Flip, check and trim. So you're getting the general idea here. Let's get one more. Next, we'll go with a pink. Lay it behind at that point, drop in the machine, couple of stitches, needle down, and then check. There's my sewing line. There's my edge about a quarter inch. And let me just grab a few of these errant threads that are starting to accumulate and at the end as well. Let me flip to check but I'm feeling pretty confident, and we look good there. Do we need a trim? Maybe a little one. And I'll just do one more so you can see where we're going. And that'll be one of the dark wedges. I'm gonna lay that behind. Take a peek to see that it's about a quarter inch inside. Drop it in the machine, couple of stitches, needle down, and just check back here. There's my line. I'm too close to my line. So I'm gonna slide that over. That looks good, and sew it down. So you can see what we're doing. And we have a little ways to go here. Go ahead and keep paper piecing on across the arc until we get to the end and then we'll do those last two together. I've gotten all the way down here to my very last piece. And I just wanna remind you, if you remember at the beginning when we placed our first two pieces, we placed our wedges with a base next to a base and a point next to a point. We're gonna do the same thing here. I have this dark wedge to go on the end so I'm going to pop it on there. I do wanna make sure that I extend this down a little bit because of the angle here. That edge of that is gonna turn up and I wanna make sure that I get this little corner on the pattern covered. So I'm gonna slide this down a little bit and then line it up up here. And I'm just again, looking to see that I have good coverage there, which I believe I do. So I can pop it in the machine and sew my last paper piecing line. Okay, so let's check, and we look good. Now, I almost wish that I had sewn this on wrong so that I could say it's so easy with your friendly seam ripper of whatever variety that you

wanna use to take this out of. It doesn't go on quite right. Sometimes it doesn't for me. This time I was lucky and it went on well. So I'm gonna flip this back, give myself a little trim. I don't have too much to trim out here. And we're finished. A little press with whatever your pressing tool is. I'm going to give this a press with the iron. Now that we're done with the paper piecing, we need to trim. I need to trim on the solid black line. Usually when I'm working with a straight piece I will employ a ruler to sort of help me out. You can trim this any way you want. I like to use a rotary cutter. Maybe you prefer to use your paper scissors, that is fine. Whatever works best for you. So there's my trim on the straightaway way. And now when I'm trimming on this curve I found that trying to manipulate the rotary cutter around that curve is a little bit harder. And sometimes I end up sort of getting a little nick in the blade, or even a nick in the mat. So I like to move my piece rather than torquing the blade. So I'll show you what I mean. You get a little, you get going on the trim and then just turn the piece so you don't have to turn the blade as sharply. Go slow and be mindful of, you know, your fingers and where they are. And I just find that it works a little bit better for me. Right, so there's my leftovers and there's that nicely trimmed block. So now we need to remove the paper. These stitches that are along the edge of both sides because we've trimmed them, they're a little bit vulnerable. So I wanna make sure that I preserve them. I don't wanna pull out those stitches as I'm removing paper. If I'm doing a big quilt, a big project I will usually just do all my piecing and trimming and just let them stack up. And then I'll sit down with a stack of wedges or you know a stack of arcs and take the paper out while I'm watching something or listening to something or talking to someone. I don't usually remove as I go along. But we're gonna do that right now. Thumbnail on those stitches so they don't pull out, pop the edge of the paper loose. Once the edge is loose you can see I'm gonna fold and then just pull on that paper. I'm pulling the paper from the paper rather than pulling up on the stitches. I wanna tax those stitches as little as possible. So loosen it up thumbnail, fold, and then pull. Again, every once in a while I'll get a little piece like this little piece that's hanging there and that just means that I wasn't probably paying quite as much attention as I could have. So I'm just going to reach in and get that out from the other end. It's not essential that you get every little scrap of paper out, we're just trying to get enough out that it's not gonna get in our way later on. Okay, so keep on going all the way down your arc here. Get the paper out. Take your time. No reason to rush. The more you rush, the more likely you're gonna leave little pieces that you're gonna have to come back and get rid of. Go ahead, continue removing paper, section by section until you get to the end.

Tiger Melon - complete the block

- Now that you've finished your tiger melon, it's time to put on the shoulder. The shoulder is the part of the block that takes that curve and squares it up so that you can sew it on to the next block. I've cut the shoulder portion out of my pattern and I've cut myself a six and a half inch strip of fabric. This is the color that I'm gonna use for my shoulder. Lemme turn it around this way. So this six and a half inch strip here, I can cut one shoulder thusly and then I can come back around, turn the pattern around and catch another one here. That way, I'm not wasting as much fabric and I don't have a piece of fabric left with this odd shape cut out of it. That's just something, you know, everybody has something that bugs them and that bothers me. So I'm gonna go ahead and line this up with the end of this fabric here. Let me see if that looks good. It does. I'm just gonna swoop it around just so it's at a better angle for me to cut. Straight line. And again, if you prefer not to cut with a rotary cutter, free-hand, you can go ahead and pin this pattern onto the fabric and then cut it with your scissors. Here comes that curve. There we are. Then I can turn my pattern and cut another one. There's my

straightaway. I'm gonna turn again just so it's a little bit easier to cut. I have a friend who has one of those fancy mats that's sort of a lazy Susan, one of these days, I might get one of those. It might make this a little bit easier. Okay, here's my edge. And there we go. All right, so that's my completed shoulder. I'm going to seam it together at this point here and then we'll sew the curve onto the paper piece portion of the block. Take your two shoulder sections, put them right sides together, and you're gonna wanna seam along this squareish edge. And these smaller, thinner parts will come along down on this edge of your tiger melon. Quarter inch seam allowance. Keeping your edges even. This is a quick seam here. (sewing machine grinding) (scissors snipping) (scissors tapping) And I'm just going to give it a little press. All right, so here we are. This is what we're aiming for. This curve here is fairly gentle, but I'm gonna do a little clip along this curve just to make sure that it will open up so that I can sew it easily onto this curve. I'm just gonna take my shears and do tiny clips, just little 16th of an inch, eighth of an inch, just tiny little clips along here to give me a little bit of relaxation on that edge. Once I get up here, the clips are not as important, but on this curve part down here. Okay. And then over at this end, I'm gonna clip just little clips. You don't wanna clip too deep, because you don't wanna get close to that seam line. And also because once you've clipped, you cannot unclip. We wanna open it up just enough to release, but not so much that it gets too big. All right. There are a lot of different ways that people undertake sewing curves. Some folks like to use glue, a little bead of glue along here as you're positioning this edge to this one. Other people like to do a little basting. Some people like to do it by hand. I generally sew this curve with one pin. I'm not very big on using pins. I like to use one pin to match my center, and then I will just sew slowly to get that good distribution of that edge along the curve. So let me put these right sides together, and I'm going to pin at that center, and I always sew my curves with the smile on top. And by that, I mean my concave curve is on top. And I do that because as I'm sewing this onto this edge, this is the piece that's going to have more tendency to get some little wrinkles in it, little tucks. And I want that to be nice and smooth. So I like it on top where I can see it. I'm gonna pull this edge around and square up on the shoulder, and there's this corner on my melon. Put those together, get them under the needle. As I'm sewing this, I'm gonna be paying attention to two things. I'm gonna be paying attention to keeping my edges even and I'm going to be paying attention to that quarter inch seam allowance. I wanna keep that quarter inch as constant as possible, because that's gonna give me the smoothest effect, the smoothest result. I don't want to, if my seam allowance is too large, then that's gonna sort of pull in on the shoulder. If it's too small, then the seam isn't gonna be as strong and it's gonna distort the shape a little bit. So we wanna keep that as clearly quarter inch as we can. I'm moving slowly here, and as I make it around this curve, I just stop and reposition a little bit. You can lift that foot up just to make sure that everything is laying properly under there. If you feel like you're coming up to a place where there might be a little tuck or a wrinkle, lift the foot up, reposition, start over. (sewing machine grinding) There we go. Now I'm coming up on my center point that I've pinned. Once I get to that point, I'm gonna pull that pin and I'm going to bring this corner around and match it up here with this corner. It's important to do this step, because you wanna make sure that this is distributed evenly along both sides of that curve. Now I keep going, taking my time, keeping those edges even, and keeping my quarter inch seam allowance constant. (sewing machine grinding) And if for some reason I should get a tuck or if the edge is not distributing well along there, I can just go back, pull a few stitches out and do it again. There's no shame in using that seam ripper. All right. (sewing machine grinding) And just to make sure that this comes out clean at the end. All right. So let's see how we did here. Looks pretty good. I don't see any wrinkles or tucks. One of the other reasons that we wanna really try to get that quarter inch

seam allowance as constant as we can is that way, your points as they come up to that seam, you're getting your full points. Every once in a while, you know, you'll have a situation where maybe the point is cut off a little bit. There's a tiny bit of cutoff here. I'm not gonna worry about it. As long as I've kept that as even as I can, most of my points are gonna look good. And this is, it's a busy pattern. So if you have, you know, 700 points in your quilt, if two or three of them are a little bit out of sync, it's not gonna matter that much. Now you are gonna wanna make a second melon, but I wanna talk for a minute about the ways that you can use fabric in your design to get a different effect. Let's take a look at the finished melon with the shoulder on it, and I wanna show you a couple of options in terms of how you're gonna put these together. Now, of course, you could use a totally different set of fabrics on the other side. There's nothing that says you have to use the same. I did use the same fabrics, but I have two different options here. Here's what it would look like if I did another melon and put the colors in the same configuration as the original melon. That's a lot of fun. I love the colors coming out from the middle. Another option would be to reverse the position of those fabrics, so that I get sort of a mirror reversal. It creates a little bit more tension in the design and it's a really interesting option. Go ahead and make your second melon, put on the shoulders, and then we'll put that block together. Two halves completed with shoulders sewn on. Let's join them together to get a full block. You can use pins if you like. The way this sets up usually though is that these seams along here will nest rather nicely and you may or may not need too many pins. (sewing machine grinding) I'm just matching them up as I go along to make sure that they fit. (sewing machine grinding) And we're done. Let's open up for the final reveal. And there we are. I'll give it a little press. This is just, this is a funny little shape and there's just something so pleasing about the way those points come together, the way the two halves interact with each other. It's just one of my favorite blocks.

Tiger Moon assembly

- The tiger moon is a little bit different from the tiger melon in that it is a full circle. There will be less negative space created by the shoulder, since the tiger moon is a full circle. The tiger melon is an oval. You'll need to cut your wedges from a seven-inch strip of fabric. The dimensions otherwise are the same. The base is still two and a half inches. The tip is still a half an inch, but it's longer so that it can cover the distance from the center of the block all the way out to the edge. The shoulders on these two versions are also a little bit different. You see that the tiger melon has this broad portion to fill in on the oval shape of the melon, whereas the shoulder for the tiger moon is symmetrical from end to end, so you can seam at either end. This quilt is all tiger moons. This is one of my favorite quilts. One of the things that's really nice about the tiger moon is that you have these long expanses of fabric where you can play one fabric against the other vertically but also you can play horizontally. I was playing with a lot of neutral colors at this point. I really enjoyed mixing a lot of different patterns and different fabrics. Some of them are very simple. You have polka dots and stripes. Some of them are a little bit more complex, and they give you a little bit more movement and sort of interest. The interplay here, for instance, between these sort of cooler, darker black and gray, and this sort of warmer cream with the lines running through it. Again, one of the nice features of the tiger moon is that you can play with how the halves are oriented. Here I have my polka dots not coming together in the center, so they're sort of offset against one another. Down in this corner, I have a block where I have my colors meeting up in the middle with the darker fabric in the background on both halves, and here we have the reverse of that same configuration. Same fabric, lighter in the background this time, and the darker meeting in the center. It's a great pattern for

playing. You can play with the texture, you can play with the pattern, you can play with the directionality of the patterns that you're using. There's just so many things that you can do with this particular pattern. This quilt is the first quilt that I did with the tiger melon pattern. I was playing with different black and whites. I had a whole selection of fabrics from some different designers, and I just wanted to experiment with trading out the lights and the darks, trading out where the colors were falling. And then as I was playing with it, I had this whole discussion with myself and also with some other folks online about what is this shape? What is it about this shape that's so interesting? What is this? And I got a lot of different responses from people. I got dinosaur egg, I got Razor football. I got all kinds of different suggestions as to what this shape was, and I did sort of land on the whole concept of a melon because of that melon shape. And then I was sort of inspired to stack these up just the same way that a bunch of melons might be stacked at a produce stand. And then I was thinking about it a little more and then I was imagining one of the melons rolling off of the pile and breaking open and landing at the bottom, and so I chose to make this half melon with sort of fruity color in there, and the name of the quilt is Accidental Fruit. You can see that the tiger melon and the tiger moon is a very versatile pattern. You can run it in lines, you can stack it up in columns. You can do a lot of different things with this shape, and within the shape, you can play around a lot with color and pattern and whether things are reflecting symmetrically, or whether you're leading the eye somewhere else with the colors that you're using in a progression throughout the blocks. This is a fun, fun pattern to work with. I love to pick it up and start something new with it whenever I have a little space in my schedule, and I think that you'll find this to be a great pattern to work with.